

School Counselor Challenges in Skilled Trades & Career Counseling

Michigan Association for College Admission Counseling
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Testifying Today

- ▶ Lori Johnston, Director of Guidance
East Grand Rapids High School

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East Grand Rapids High School
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MACAC

- ▶ High school counselors and college admissions professionals (2 and 4 year schools)
- ▶ Professional development
- ▶ Student services- college fairs and Camp College
- ▶ Professional advocacy
- ▶ www.macac.org



Challenge: Counselor Caseload

- ▶ 706 to 1 in Michigan
- ▶ 5th largest in the nation
- ▶ Impacts all services to all students

Possible Solutions: Counselor Caseload

- ▶ Consider the success many schools have had in creating school counselor- college advisors partnerships
- ▶ Review the success the Colorado Initiative has had in increasing the number of school counselors

Possible Solutions: Counselor Caseload

- ▶ Review the amount of time counselors spend on non-counseling activities.

Challenge: Access to Quality Information on Skilled Trades and Careers

- ▶ New information coming from many resources
- ▶ Often seems disjointed, incomplete, or hard to access

Possible Solutions: Access to Quality Information on Skilled Trades and Careers

- ▶ Web-based repository organized at the state level for Career and Skilled Trades information
- ▶ Supplement to Postsecondary Handbook to include more information on Careers and Skilled Trades
- ▶ Develop and post "Best Practice" lesson plans (group and individual) for counselors to use

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- ▶ Same survey shows counselors have desire for more on-the-job professional development

Possible Solutions: Training Counselors Receive in Career and College Counseling

- ▶ Preservice training: Create higher, more specific standards for topics to be covered in career and college counseling

Possible Solutions: Training Counselors Receive in Career and College Counseling

- ▶ Preservice training: Create higher, more specific standards for topics to be covered in career and college counseling
- ▶ Professional development: Create specific continuing education requirements for counselors in career and college counseling, while exploring ways to improve access to professional development

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- ▶ Many students with interest in skilled trades get behind early in Geometry, Chemistry, requiring them to engage in credit recovery rather than CTE exploration
- ▶ Multiple overlapping graduation paths lead to logistical overloads for counselors, leading to reduced services for students

Possible Solution: Graduation Requirements

- ▶ Review the impact state, local, and personal curriculum graduation requirements can combine to inhibit exploration of career and skilled trade programs for students with strong CTE interest and potential

Challenge: Lack of Awareness and Misperceptions of Skilled Trades

- ▶ Students don't always know full array of skilled trade options
- ▶ Parents often see college as the only real option

Possible Solution: Lack of Awareness and Misperceptions of Skilled Trades

- ▶ More active, visible partnerships between schools and local business community, including
 - ▶ Internships
 - ▶ Job Shadowing
 - ▶ Summer Career Exploration Programs
 - ▶ In-class Demonstrations

